

TREE ADVISORY BOARD
VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING

MEMBERS: TONY BARDES; CHARLES DAY; KORY RIESTERER; GORDON ROBERTSON; JENNIFER ZWARICH

08/26/2015
MEETING MINUTES
8:00pm Village Hall

Present: Tony Bardes, Charles Day, Kory Riesterer, Jennifer Zwarich.
Absent: Gordon Robertson

Summary:

Meeting opened at 8:06 pm.

Motion made to approve 7/29 meeting minutes. Motion carried by vote of 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Brief update on TMP draft work, specifically **Tree Inventory Survey**. J. Zwarich reminded TAB members to please complete survey work by September meeting and use GPS coordinates given continuing problems with correct tree ID and location. Brief discussion of possibly physically 'tagging' trees with ID numbers to ease future survey updating.

J. Zwarich gave brief update on **Main Street sidewalk project**. She has been walking around with CHA engineers and village trustees to advise widening existing tree pits adjacent to sidewalk work whenever possible and adding structural soil to these pits. Sidewalk work slated to begin in spring. One or two trees will need to be removed on Main Street due to work but 10 trees will be added based on funds available from the project grant. J. Zwarich has preliminarily recommended 10 tree cultivars for the project, to be shared and discussed with TAB in future. T. Bardes asked about root tree guards and J. Zwarich noted they exist in Maple tree pits in front of PCNR building to her knowledge. TAB briefly debated the costs and merits of root guards.

There were no updates to the **draft list of local arborists**. TAB discussed running a press release for ad in both papers soliciting area arborists to submit their names to the list. It was noted this is not required of TAB but would be a courtesy. When the issue was brought up about including ISA certification and licenses to the list, T. Bardes mentioned vendors must be licensed to do work with homeowners but not municipalities.

J. Zwarich circulated a draft list of **criteria for judging public requests for tree work** and discussion ensued. J. Zwarich also circulated a **draft application form or permit for Public Tree Cutting** to be based on said criteria. She noted the draft was based on research of existing criteria/permits from other municipalities. T. Bardes would like to add ISA pruning guidelines to the application form to aid information sharing. He also volunteered to call and speak to other municipalities who have created such a permit to find out how the process has been working for them. TAB members deliberated briefly if there was another way to judge public requests for village-owned tree work but determined a 'permitting process' was the most rational way to protect the public treescape. TAB also determined it was vital to make such a process as simple as possible: cost-free, available for download on the Village website, and that decision-making be made in a matter of days rather than months for simple requests. It was noted TAB should specify an enforcement officer. J. Zwarich noted that the tree cutting permit would, however, require amending the Public Tree Law as it

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currently stands by adding in "No person shall, *without a Tree Cutting permit*, mutilate a public tree, etc." TAB members all agreed it was important to speak to the Village Clerk to see how such a permit would fit into existing village processes.

Brief public comment was taken at this point. Rich Franco questioned: why not use existing village code only rather than create new criteria? J. Zwarich noted that this was 'internal' criteria to be used by TAB to guide their decision-making process for recommendations. T. Bardes added that criteria needs to exist so TAB is not perceived as a 'subjective' Board but one that has sound and solid reasons for its recommendations. It was determined that TAB members will review draft and submit any additional criteria to J. Zwarich, who will then consolidate and present for discussion and adoption at next meeting.

A draft flow chart of the **process for reporting tree code violation** was also circulated for review. Brief discussion ensued that this was an 'internal' flow chart. J. Zwarich will present to Village Clerk Mary Saari for input and approval before solidifying chart.

NEW BUSINESS

T. Bardes reported on an issue raised by a resident on Mountain Ave. regarding the **lacebug infestation of London Plane trees**. The resident made the same complaint two years ago but T. Bardes was not certain if the village took any action then. He outlined four options for action: 1) leave the trees alone 2) do a soil drench 3) use a foliar spray 4) do an injection. TAB briefly discussed and all present agreed that in this case, leaving the trees alone was the most prudent response. Lacebug infestations are cyclical, seasonal, and do not do permanent damage to healthy trees. Treating only a few trees would not eradicate the problem in future. To do so requires treating every London Plane in the village, at a high cost to taxpayers. J. Zwarich mentioned that widening tree pits to allow for better health of trees would be part of a more holistic approach to pest management. Trees that are not under stress are less likely to become infested. TAB agreed that J. Zwarich would draft a letter to VBOT with the recommendation.

Discussion ensued around **recent vandalism/accident incident** that killed the Main Street Linden tree in front of Carolyn's Flower Shoppe. J. Zwarich noted how disappointing it was to lose a healthy tree she had personally helped select care for. TAB members were all in strong agreement that an incident report be filed documenting the loss of village property so that a record is on file. T. Bardes volunteered to calculate what the value/replacement cost of the tree would be. J. Zwarich stated she would follow up to find out when/if an incident report gets filed but that as of the meeting, knew only that police were still investigating. No further information was forthcoming from the village. TAB members briefly discussed whether witnesses would come forward and what, if any, information regarding delivery truck schedules Carolyn herself might know and shed light on. J. Zwarich also reported that the sidewalk project will change the curb at the location the tree was lost, hopefully reducing potential future issues with replanting in that tree pit.

J. Zwarich reported that this **August three Main Street trees all slated for removal** due to death or near-death status were taken down by the combined labor of Central Hudson and the Village Highway department. Special thanks to Ed Trimble for coordinating and getting that work done at no expense to the village! TAB members all agreed this was great news and saved the village a lot of money.

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J. Zwarich also circulated a copy of **letter(s) received from Robert J. Hilpert, Attorney**, on behalf of Josh Maddocks of Garrison Tree in response to a letter from a village resident received by TAB and VBOT regarding work done by Garrison Tree. TAB members unanimously agreed that no response was needed by TAB and that the letter(s) would simply be placed on file.

Comments were received from the public:

Rich Franco spoke to item #6 on the agenda regarding the process for reporting code violations. He questioned why the first call doesn't go straight to the code enforcement officer as with any other village code violation? J. Zwarich responded that it was because the code enforcer does not necessarily have knowledge of trees that TAB is involved now in the process to help make a 'judgment call' as to the violation. R. Franco argued that it would be simpler for TAB if the process (or flowchart steps listed) was streamlined. He recommended TAB operate on the next level as a Board rather than immediately getting emails and phone calls for every minor incident. After brief discussion TAB members agreed this was a good point and J. Zwarich offered to amend the flowchart to include only three steps clarifying the processes as it currently works. R. Franco also spoke to item #4 and questioned how the village chooses a vendor to do tree work. TAB responded that under a certain dollar amount it is typically at the Mayor's discretion and that TAB can only advise—over a certain dollar amount the VBOT is required to issue a RFP. R. Franco's final comment spoke to TAB Chairperson's role and what appears from his perspective to be a disproportionate amount of work compared to what other TAB members are doing. K. Riesterer responded that this particular meeting required a lot of research, which J. Zwarich, as Chairperson, is most equipped to do. Since TAB is still in the beginning stages as a Board it is very much still in 'research mode'. K. Riesterer noted what other TAB members had/have been doing which R. Franco might not be aware of not having attended previous meetings. R. Franco concluded his comments by telling TAB: "You're doing great work!"

A second member of the public also commented on agenda item #6. He felt tree violations should not be at the sole discretion of the code enforcer or police officer and should include TAB or at the very least cc TAB on violation issues. J. Zwarich agreed and responded that this was precisely why TAB was creating a 'flow chart' so that TAB would, in fact, be included in the process.

Motion to adjourn meeting passed at 9:50 pm.